

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1490

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL NICE

UNCLAS MARSEILLE 0084

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, FR

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER BARRE S POLITICAL ADDRESS AT
CARPENTRAS MARCH 2.

REF: LYON 0047

1) THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER AND SOME 1500 OTHERS WERE ON HAND TO HEAR PRIME MINISTER BARRE PRESENT HIS SCHEDULED SPEECH YESTERDAY (MARCH 2) AT CARPENTRAS. THOUGH REGIONAL PROMOTION BILLED THE EVENT AS A SPEECH OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE , BARRE S PRESENTATION PROVED TO CONTAIN NOTHING NEW. AIMING MAINLY TO ENHANCE THE ELECTION PROSPECTS OF THE PR IN GENERAL, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY THOSE OF LOCAL CANDIDATES SORTANT BERARD OF ORANGE AND MAIRE CHARETTIER OF CARPENTRAS, THE BULK OF BARRE S CONTENT DEALT WITH THE POINTS AND ISSUES HE ENUNCIATES IN HIS FEBRUARY 27 RADIO INTERVIEW AT LYON, (SEE REFTEL).

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2) BARRE S REMARKS EMPHASIZED POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE MAJORITE, AND STAYED AWAY FROM HEAVY AND SPECIFIC CRITICISM ABOUT THE LEFT, NO LEADER OF THE LEFT WAS REFERRED TO BY NAME. HE SAID THAT FRANCE SHARED MANY OF ITS DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, THAT IN LARGE MEASURE THE PROBLEMS STEMMED FROM HEAVY PRICE INCREASES FOR PETROLEUM AND IMPORTED RAW MATERIALS, AND THAT THE TRULY EFFECTIVE AN-

SWERS TO THESE DIFFICULTIES FOR ALL THE FRENCH WOULD BE FOUND IN REALISTIC SOLUTIONS BEING PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN THE HOPEFUL BUT WILD SWINGS IN POLICIES AND PRACTICES WHICH THE LEFT RECOMMENDED WITH ITS HEAD IN THE CLOUDS . NO EASY AND PAINLESS SOLUTIONS ARE OR COULD BE AVAILABLE, AND ALL THE FRENCH WOULD HAVE TO JOIN IN TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE AND TO CARRY THEIR INDIVIDUAL SHARE OF THE LOAD UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT REMEDIES ARE TRULY EFFECTIVE. HE WARNED THAT OPTINF FOTR THE COMFORTABLE AND ALLURING ANSWERS OF THE LEFT WOULD IN FACT LEAD TO INTERNAL CHAOS AND A GROWING ISOLATION OF FRANCE FROM THE REST OF THE WESTERN WORLD.

3. PORTUGAL S PROBLEMS WERE CITED AS ILLUSTRATING WHAT THE FRENCH COULD EXPECT FROM LEGISLATIVE VICTORY BY THE LEFT. BARRE ACKNOWLEDGED MENDES- FRANCE S RECENT COMMENT THAT HE COMING YEARS WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR FRANCE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT HE HELD THAT PROBLEMS WILL BE FAR GREATER IF THE LEFT WINS. ALL THESE REMARKS WERE CQUCHED IN VERY GENERAL TERMES, AND NO CARROTS WERE HELD OUT TO ATTRACT INDIVIDUAL VOTER GROUPS SUCH AS LES RAPATRIES AND FRUIT AND WINE GRAPE PRODUCERS WHO WERE SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL MENTION BY THE PRESIDENT WHEN HE SPOKE AT CARPENTRAS ON JULY 8 LAST.

4) THE LARGE MAJORITY WHO CAME TO HEAR AND SEE THEIR
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IMPORTANT VISITOR APPEARED TO BE MIDDLE CALSS COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS PEOPLE, ARTISANS, AND FARMERS. THOUGH INCLUDING MANY PARTY WORKERS, THOSE PRESENT REFLECTED THE POPULAR VOTER ELEMENT MUCH MORE THAN THE PARTY CADRE. THEY GAVE WARM APPLAUSE TO BARRE S MAIN POINTS AND VERY EVIDENTLY LIKED HIS STRAIGHTFORWARD, EARNEST DELIVERY. HECKLING WAS LIMITED TO SOME YOUNGISH RPR SUPPORTERS IN THE BACK OF THE AUDITORIUM WHO VOLUNTARILY CEASED THEIR EFFORTS AFTER YELLING OUT PRO RPR REMARKS SEVERAL TIMES EARLY IN THE PROGRAM. MEIMA

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